

Strategic Planning in Action at DHS

The Federal Government has moved towards a management style that focuses heavily on goals, planning, milestones and measures. The Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (P.L. 103-62) required that all government agencies submit yearly performance plans to the President and Congress, as well as end of year performance reports on the status of these plans.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has taken this idea one step further. Budgets for programs will be linked directly to plans and performance through a system called the Planning, Programming and Budgeting System (PPBS).

The DHS Strategic Plan is the Foundation of all Program Planning

PPBS uses strategic planning to drive the process of developing budgets and augmenting resources. Through this system, the DHS and FEMA strategic plans are used as guides for the direction in which our programs should be headed. As a Department, we are expected to not only understand the Strategic Plan, but to manage by it and strive to achieve the goals and objectives laid out by it. Programs will be evaluated, funded and reprogrammed based upon their applicability to the goals of the Strategic Plan. The DHS Strategic Plan can be found online at:

http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/interweb/assetlibrary/DHS_StratPlan_FINAL_spread.pdf

The DHS Strategic Goal that is most applicable to FEMA, the Response Division and NDMS is:

DHS Strategic Goal 4:

Lead, manage and coordinate the national response to acts of terrorism, natural disasters, or other emergencies.

FEMA's Strategic Plan Fits Under the DHS Plan and Further Defines our Direction

The FEMA strategic plan begins with the principles of saving lives and property and encompasses a broad range of response, recovery and other disaster missions. FEMA's Strategic Plan can be found online at <http://www.fema.gov/library/strategicplanfy03.shtm>

FEMA Mission Statement:

Lead America to prepare for, prevent, respond to and recover from disasters.

Priorities in the Five FEMA Program Areas

FEMA is one of many components within DHS that manages through the PPBS process. Each component in DHS plans the activities and initiatives of their programs at least five years into the future through a system called the Future Year Homeland Security Program (FYHSP). FYHSP involves setting a Long Term Goal for each program that sets the bar for program performance and links directly to the Strategic Plan. Yearly milestones are set in each program area to guide planning and budgeting direction. The goal of this process is to create milestones (benchmarks in progress) to demonstrate a cycle of achievement towards the long-term goals.

Response Program (and NDMS) Long Term Goal

The multi-disciplinary teams in the Response Program will be consistently evaluated to achieve fully operational status and meet established average response times.

For planning purposes, there are five programs in FEMA (Preparedness, Response, Recovery, Mitigation and National Security.) Each year, the program directors and the Under Secretary set priorities based on which activities are most important to FEMA and the achievement of the long-term goals, for that given year.

Decisions about funding, training, resource allocation and the focus of management are based on these priorities. The priority process helps us to define the specific cross-cutting areas that we must address in order to meet our yearly milestones.

The Response Division Priorities for Fiscal Year's 04 and 05 are:

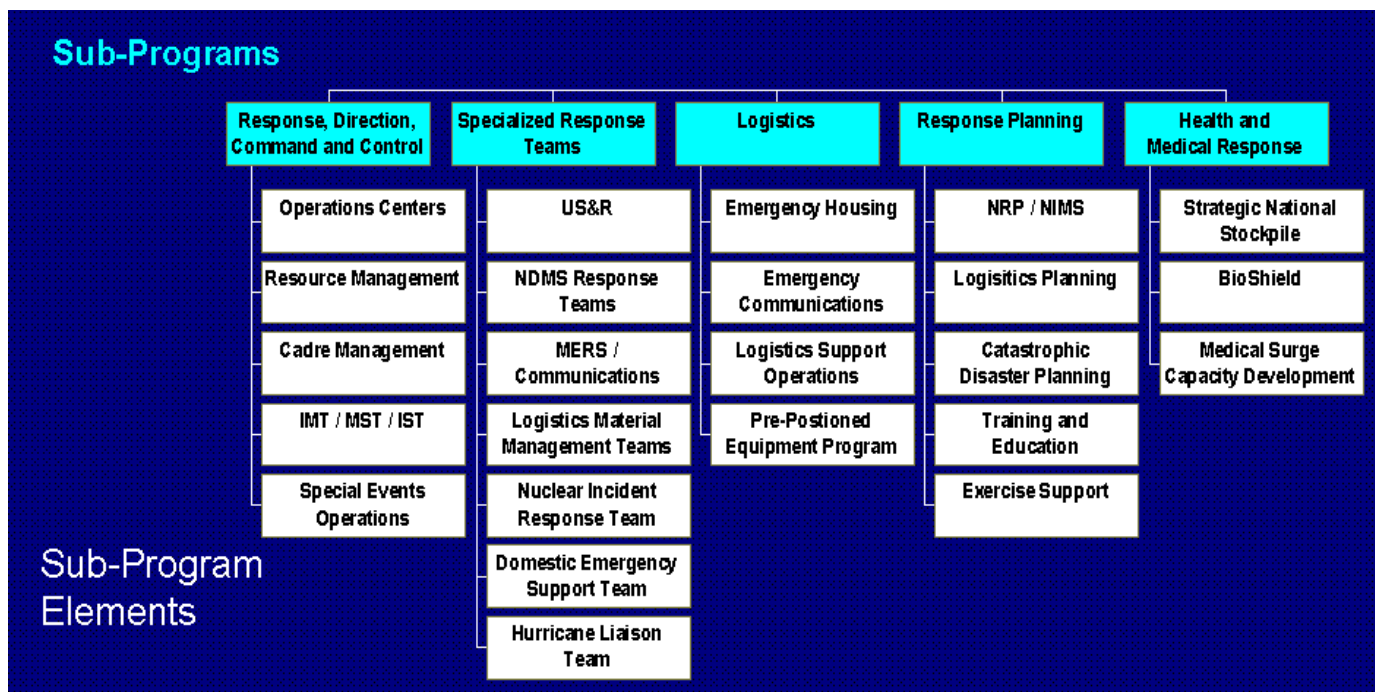
- 1. Incident Management Teams**
- 2. Catastrophic Planning (New Orleans)**
- 3. 5 Prototypes for Emergency Housing**
- 4. Phase 1 of 12-hour Response** (NDMS & US&R Transportation)
- 5. Phase 1 of WMD Capability for NDMS and US&R**
- 6. Develop and Deliver ICS Training** (with Preparedness)
- 7. Develop and Deliver "Log 101" Training** (with Preparedness)
- 8. Creation of the MERS Cadre**
- 9. NIMS Rollout and Outreach**
- 10. Cadre Training – to Develop Core Competencies**

Subprograms and Element Level Planning and Milestones:

For planning purposes, each program in FEMA has been divided into subprograms that represent the various mission areas contained in each. It is at this level of detail that the most robust planning activity takes place.

Because the priorities and milestones for every program at FEMA are based on the DHS strategic Goals, we can easily justify our work, budgets and resource allocations. The next important step is to break the yearly milestones into smaller levels of achievement as quarterly milestones and set realistic goals for achieving them.

The Response Program is Divided into Five Subprograms and Elements for Planning Purposes and Milestone Tracking:



Accountability is the Key to Success

Once every quarter, and at the end of the year, program managers are required to report to the Under Secretary on the status of every element and the level of achievement they have accomplished in relation to the priorities for that year. At these review sessions, the managers will identify weak areas, necessity for remedial action and external factors that are getting in the way of successful accomplishments.

In order for the program managers to make these detailed reports, every level of program employee has to be accountable for their own achievement of tasks, goals, activities and milestones as they relate to the program priorities. This accountability from everyone ensures that we are tracking our progress as a program and linking personal accountability to overall accomplishments.

In the coming months, DHS will be unveiling a personnel system that more clearly links work plans to priorities and goals; and further links personnel decisions to successful endeavors. In the meantime, the Response Division will be encouraging everyone to begin linking their own activities directly to the priorities of the program.

Measurement as an Indicator

The above examples explain how we set goals and milestones that are linked from the Highest Level of DHS to the ground level where we actually apply our programs. We will also be measuring our progress not only by the successful accomplishment of milestones, but by the measurable difference these milestones make in the way we conduct our mission. Response has set a series of measures, “a yardstick of accomplishment” by which we will rate our progress towards achieving the long-term goal: “multi-disciplinary teams in the Response Program consistently being evaluated to achieve fully operational status and meet established average response times.”

Program areas are accountable to the Under Secretary of FEMA for the status of their activities. Likewise, the Under Secretary is also accountable to the Secretary or Homeland Security on many of the same milestones and measures. Some of these priorities are also reported directly to the President on a regular (sometimes monthly) basis.

At the end of each year, each program is also required to submit a Performance Accountability Report (PAR) to Congress, which documents how well we have achieved our Main Performance Measure. If a program has not successfully achieved a performance measure, we have to explain how we did, why we failed to achieve it and what remedial action we are taking to achieve it in the future. The Main Performance Measure for the Response Program (and NDMS) is the first measure in the diagram below (categories A-D).

Response Program Performance Measures

Performance Measures	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
A. Cumulative percentage of emergency teams and operations evaluated through at least one readiness evaluation or exercise (Four Year Cycle).	N/A	(A) 25%	(A) 50%	(A) 75%	(A)100%	(A) 25%	(A) 55%
B. Average percentage of evaluated teams and operations achieving “fully operational” or better status.	N/A	(B)50%	(B)60%	(B)70%	(B)80%	(B)90%	(B)100%
C. Average percentage of evaluated teams rising one operational level in a year (considering four operational levels.)	N/A	(C) N/A	(C)60%	(C)80%	(C)90%	(C)100%	(C)100%
D. Average maximum response time in hours for emergency response teams to arrive on scene.	(D) 72	(D) 60	(D) 48	(D) 36	(D) 24	(D) 12	(D) 12
Staffing level of FEMA’s four Incident Management Teams (IMTs)	25%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Percentage of:	(A) N/A	(A)25%	(A)25%	(A)25%	(A)25%	(A)25%	(A)25%
(A) National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) teams and hospitals trained and exercised in large-scale patient and mass casualty evacuations,	(B) 200	(B) 1000	(B) 5000	(B) 20000	(B) 50000	(B) 75000	(B) 100,000
(B) Casualty treatment, evacuation and transportation capability of the national NDMS system, and,	(C)10%	(C)15%	(C)20%	(C)25%	(C)30%	(C)35%	(C)40%
(C) Percentage of DMAT and DMORT teams with appropriate WMD capability.							
Number of highest-risk communities for which catastrophic plans have been completed per year.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Number of evacuees for whom intermediate emergency housing can be provided.	600	1200	3000	25000	70000	100,000	100,000
Average logistical response time in hours to provide essential services to an impacted community of 50,000 or less.	72	68	60	48	36	24	24

What Does All this Mean to You?:

This summary of the strategic planning and management process at DHS has only scratched the surface of the myriad of activities that go into the successful achievement of our goals. Ultimately, we are all striving to exceed the DHS Strategic Plan Goal to “Lead, manage and coordinate the national response to acts of terrorism, natural disasters, or other emergencies.”

As Team Leaders and team members, you can contribute to the process by focusing on the goals of DHS, FEMA and Response. You can already see from this brief summary of the process how you fit into the larger umbrella of planning. However, you can go a step further in setting team goals, milestones and measures that will lead to successful achievement at the higher levels of planning. This will not only lead to your success as a team, but will help to put into the perspective the importance each individual has on the bigger picture.

Planning is only useful if it is successful at the time of implementation. It is also important to remember that we should always be striving to achieve our mission with an eye towards constant improvement.